



Legislative Report

April 15, 2008

Bovine Tuberculosis Program Update

Provided by the Animal Industry Division
Michigan Department of Agriculture

Michigan Received Emergency USDA funding for TB Eradication

On April 2, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the approval of nearly \$3.5 million in emergency funding to continue efforts to eradicate bovine tuberculosis in Michigan. This one time funding, not for ongoing eradication program activities, came in response to a request Michigan submitted in February 2008 for \$9.5 million in federal monies. MDA requested these funds for:

- Testing of livestock and wild deer in the "potential high risk" designated areas in Iosco and Shiawassee counties and ongoing surveillance associated with the "potential high risk" designation
- Education, incentives, and technical assistance for on-farm implementation of wildlife risk reduction measures
- Indemnification for livestock herds and animals

We indicated these funds would be used for a three-year project intended to address concerns identified by USDA and to restore momentum for disease eradication. The impact of these projects will be monitored and adjustments will be made on an annual basis.

We clearly communicated the Michigan Legislature's strong commitment to the eradication effort – including the increased \$1.6 million appropriation in fiscal year 2008 with a planned additional \$1.7 million in fiscal year 2009. All of these funds will be needed to launch and maintain the comprehensive effort of coordinated public and private sector actions needed.

Assessment of Current Information Technology and Data Systems.

Steve Halstead participated in a USDA, National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials (NASAHO), and National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) Information Technology forum in Denver on March 17 and 18.

Michigan has particular interests because of our extensive interactions with USDA Veterinary Services (VS) in the State/Federal Cooperative bovine TB eradication program and our cattle identification requirements. Outcomes of the meeting were the proposed establishment of a National Animal Health Board, which will guide VS IT efforts, and a processes outline describing strategic, communications, and funding plans. The VS Chief Information Officer delivered the report to VS Management in Riverdale, Maryland. Initial indications are that the recommendations have been well received and will be supported.

Livestock Industry, Wildlife, and Government Coordination

Leaders from Michigan agricultural and wildlife communities, the Michigan Department of Agriculture, and the Michigan Department of Natural resources met on April 11 at the Michigan Farm Bureau offices in Lansing. Key issues discussed included:

- Wildlife risk mitigation plans in the TB infected Modified Accredited Zone (MAZ)
- Targeted surveillance in the Modified Accredited Advanced Zone (MAAZ) and Free Zone
- Livestock indemnification insurance as means for increasing both personal responsibility and ensuring a sustainable safety net for livestock producers
- Possible initiatives to better link TB eradication efforts in the agriculture and wildlife communities at the local level

A public meeting is scheduled for April 23, 2008, in Alpena, Michigan to discuss recent changes in the bovine TB eradication program, to outline where Michigan may be heading, and to solicit input on how we can best work together to achieve shared goals.

Wildlife Risk Mitigation (WRM) Producer Meetings

MDA and USDA Wildlife Services staff met with a focus group of producers from the Modified Accredited Zone (MAZ) on March 26 and April 9 to continue development of a user friendly assessment tool for cattle producers. The Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) is being used as a model. We have also initiated a series of meetings with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service to determine how TB eradication program efforts can best be linked with their on-farm risk reduction capabilities.

Annual Cattle Surveillance Testing Status

During the second half of March, USDA VS accepted a Michigan proposal to transition from random to targeted, or risk based surveillance in the MAAZ. USDA indicated fewer herds would need to be tested if a risk based system was developed.

Michigan livestock industry associations have encouraged movement from the current surveillance program to a risk based system. The benefits of this surveillance plan include:

- Increased program efficiency by focusing surveillance testing on the herds and areas with increased risk of TB infection.
- Reduced the number of whole herd tests needed to meet surveillance requirements by:
 - Lowering the minimum number of herds to be tested from 750 to 500.
 - Giving Michigan credit for whole herd testing that would not have counted toward random testing requirements. Examples: herds tested in “potentially high risk” designated areas and herds tested because farmers bought animals from known TB infected herds.
 - Shifting surveillance testing northward to areas where bovine TB infected wildlife are more likely to be found. MDA intends to test all cattle herds in the following counties during the next three years: Kalkaska, Grand Traverse, Wexford, Missaukee, Osceola, Roscommon, Clare, Gladwin, Ogemaw, Gladwin, Iosco, and Arenac. The results of wildlife and cattle testing from those counties will then be used to determine what additional testing, if any, is needed before TB free Status is granted to the MAAZ.

Field staff will continue to focus on completing surveillance testing of cattle herds within the 10-mile circles in Iosco and Shiawassee counties.

Iosco County Circle Testing

92 confirmed herds:

74 tested

9 scheduled to be tested

6 yet to schedule

1 to be tested by personal veterinarian

2 refusing to test

Shiawassee County Circle Testing

127 confirmed herds:

91 tested

31 scheduled to be tested

6 yet to schedule

14 herds on record, needing confirmation that they still have cattle

Zone	Annual Surveillance Requirement	Completed
Modified Accredited Zone	1,000 annual herd tests on individual farm anniversary dates	Three herds are currently overdue
Modified Accredited Advanced Zone and Free Zone	Minimum of 500 higher risk herds	165 (74 in Iosco County and 91 in Shiawassee County)

Zonal Boundary Compliance

A total of 151 livestock vehicles were either inspected or accounted for by MDA staff at the Agriculture Inspection Station located at the Mackinac Bridge in St. Ignace, Michigan. MDA staff inspected 60 vehicles containing cattle (40 percent of all livestock vehicles – including horse trailers) and found one possible cattle movement violation. Eight livestock vehicles drove past MDA staff without stopping, these are usually empty or have horses in them. We are undergoing an education campaign to ask people hauling horses across the bridge to please stop.

During the month of March, Michigan State Police Safety Officers stopped seven vehicles during surveillance of the MAZ and MAAZ borders. One driver was not in compliance with movement requirements.

A refresher training session was held for the Mackinac Bridge Agriculture Inspection Station personnel in March.

The Department is continuing to work with Mackinac Bridge authorities, the Michigan Department of Transportation, and others to determine the feasibility, legality, and cost-effectiveness of installing video surveillance equipment at the Agriculture Inspection Station to monitor drive-by traffic.

There were 196 cattle movement permits from the MAZ in the month of March, 2008.

Slaughter Surveillance and Slaughter Verification

There were 18,160 head of cattle scanned at Michigan livestock markets in March 2008. The numbers of cattle marketed were down from the previous month, but still typical for this time of the year. Only one market had problems with electronic reads and data transmission.

Slaughter facilities scanned 12,116 head of cattle in March 2008. A slaughter facility in Wisconsin had a reader down for the entire month. The reader was repaired on March 29, 2008. A major challenge is maintaining readers in private slaughter facilities in other states. Michigan Department of Agriculture has no regulations to require reader performance in slaughter facilities, but instead relies on voluntary working partnerships within facilities located in Michigan and other states.

Michigan State University and MDA Partnership

MSU College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) and MDA are partnering to sponsor two veterinary students working full time on bovine TB issues this summer. The project is as part of the Summer Food Systems Fellowship Program that the CVM created to provide opportunities for veterinary students to explore food animal career opportunities. MSU and MDA will be splitting the salary costs.

Education and Outreach

Opportunity for Increased Collaboration with CDC and MSU

A high-level delegation from CDC's National Center for Zoonotic, Vectorborne and Enteric Diseases met with Michigan leaders to explore human and animal health partnerships. CDC was interested in Michigan because of our demonstrated track record of multi-disciplinary problem solving. Michigan's TB Eradication Project was mentioned as an example of bringing together state agencies, universities, and the private sector to tackle a tough issue.

Communication Action Plans with associated materials are available for the Shiawassee County circle testing, wildlife risk mitigation plans in the MAZ, Risk Based Surveillance Plans, and for reaching out to the petroleum and convenience store industries regarding the sale of bait.

An informational meeting for livestock producers in the Shiawassee County circle testing area is scheduled for April 17 from 7:30 - 9 p.m. at the Bennington Township Hall, 5849 S. M-52 Owosso. Both MDA and Department of Natural Resources staff will be available to update producers on progress to date and to answer questions. Post cards were mailed to beef and dairy producers to invite them to the meeting and flyers were posted in areas that are frequented by farmers (grain elevators, farm implement stores, etc.)

A bovine TB stakeholders' meeting with agriculture and wildlife industry leaders and the MDA and DNR department Directors is scheduled for April 23, 2008 in Alpena.

Bovine TB issues in the media:

An upcoming segment Michigan Farm and Garden TV of Bovine TB program was recorded featuring changes to the TB Eradication program. The segment emphasized that the finding of a TB (+) deer in Shiawassee County demonstrates the mobile nature of bovine TB and emphasized the importance of livestock producers implementing on-farm Wildlife Risk Mitigation programs to protect their livelihoods.

http://www.mlive.com/flintjournal/index.ssf/2008/03/testing_for_bovine_tb_begins_i.html

http://blog.mlive.com/bcopinion/2008/03/too_early_to_bait_deer_again_i.html

<http://www.mlive.com/newsflash/index.ssf?/base/news-52/1207262942191280.xml&storylist=newsmichigan>

<http://hsdailywire.com/single.php?id=5839>

http://www.mlive.com/flintjournal/voices/index.ssf/2008/03/graham_let_hunters_have_shot_a.html

<http://www.michigan-sportsman.com/forum/showthread.php?t=230759>